



Welkom

van de Voorzitter van de Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, prof.dr. J.A. Bruijn,
ter gelegenheid van de ontvangst van Kim Jin-pyo, voorzitter van de Nationale Assemblée
van Zuid-Korea

datum 26 maart 2024

Excellencies,
Dear Colleague,

환영

On behalf of the Dutch Senate I would like to welcome you as well. It is a privilege for us to receive you here today. And for me personally, it is also good to see you again, after we met during the P20 in India about five months ago.

In New Delhi we spoke about the visit of President Yoon Suk-yeol to the Netherlands, that was about to take place in December. I am happy to inform you that the meeting with the President was successful. I enjoyed talking to him, especially about the history of the relations between our two countries.

Your visit here today forms part of that relationship as well, a relationship that goes back for centuries.

In the Netherlands - as in many parts of the Western world - little was known about Korea, until the early 17th century. The first known Dutch record for trade relations was in 1610 when Prince Maurits approved a request from the Dutch East India Company to start trading with Korea.

In recent times the bond between Korea and the Netherlands was strengthened during what we in the Netherlands call 'the Korean war' that started in 1950. Dutch soldiers fought for the freedom of the Koreans.

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and the Netherlands have been officially established in 1961 and were intensified 55 years later with the 'Comprehensive and Future-oriented Partnership'. And two years ago a Strategic Partnership was formed between Korea and the Netherlands. The trade relations between our countries include areas such as nuclear energy, smart farming, new and renewable energy and the creative industry.

And not only on a governmental level, also our parliaments share a history of bilateral meetings. Delegations of the Korean parliament have paid visits to the Senate and met with members of the Committees on Economic Affairs and Climate, on Foreign Affairs, on Public Health, Welfare and Sports and on Finances. In the Senate, we cherish these meetings.



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In 2023 Korea and the Netherlands, together with other countries, co-hosted the second Summit for Democracy. Last week, the third edition of this initiative took place in Korea. I am looking forward to hearing from you what you have learned from that summit that is worthwhile sharing with us. As I understand, one of the central themes of the Summit was the influence on democracy of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and algorithms.

The Dutch Senate has for the past three years discussed the growing influence of AI on decision making processes and the role of the Senate. This has resulted in the establishment of the Senate Committee on Digital Affairs, and the recruiting of more specialized expertise within the support staff.

It is important that we do not take democracy for granted. It is good to take the time to reflect on the benefits of democracy, but also to reflect on the threats to the ideas of freedom, human rights and rule of law. Ideas that are at the core of our democracies. Especially for us as parliamentarians, and of course as Speakers, these are themes that are close to our hearts.

Thank you.

감사합니다